

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 L-02 IO-03

DPW-01 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00

RSR-01 /060 W

----- 071766

R 271143Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5242

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13615

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, VS

SUBJECT: MR 2 SITREP, JULY 27

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO CINCPAC USDAO SAIGON

USSAG NKP JULY 27 REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE NHA TRANG 0730

1. SECURITY SITUATION: FIGHTING IN THE PAST 48-HOUR PERIOD WAS CONCENTRATED IN THE FOUR PROVINCES OF MR 2 WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN MOST CONTESTED: KONTUM HEADED THE TALLY WITH 12 INCIDENTS; BINH THUAN HAD TEN, BINH DINH NINE, AND PHU YEN SIX. ONE INCIDENT EACH IN KHANH HOA AND PLEIKU BROUGHT THE REGIONAL TOTAL TO 39 INCIDENTS FOR THE PERIOD, CONTINUING THE RELATIVELY HIGH LEVEL OF ACTIVITY HERE IN LAST TWO REPORTING PERIODS. INCIDENTS INCLUDED: 19 ENEMY ATTACKS BY FIRE, SIX MININGS, THREE GROUND ASSAULTS, NINE FIREFIGHTS BETWEEN ENEMY AND FRIENDLY FORCES ON PATROL, AND TWO SUCCESSFUL RF SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS. CASUALTIES FOR THE TWO DAY PERIOD WERE ALSO HIGH (THOUGH ABOUT THREE-FOURTHS OF THEM WERE INCURRED ON JULY 25): VC/NVA: 45 KIA, TEN CAPTURED; RVNAF: 16 KIA, 70 WIA, ONE MISSING. THE BATTLE FOR TRUNG NGHIA IN KONTUM

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ACCOUNTED FOR NINE OF THE FRIENDLY KILLED AND 41 OF THE WOUNDED,

AS OPPOSED TO ONLY 13 OF THE ENEMY KIA. RF SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS IN HAM THUAN DISTRICT, BINH THUAN, AND TUY HOA DISTRICT, PHU YEN, RESULTED IN ENEMY LOSSES OF NINE KILLED; NINE CAPTURED; 102 BUNKERS, SEVEN HOUSES AND A CONSIDERABLE QUANTITY OF AMUNITION AND PROVISIONS DESTROYED; AND, IN CONTRAST, ONLY ONE RF WOUNDED.

2. CONSUL IN KONTUM REPORTS THAT FIGHTING WEST OF CITY INTENSIFIED JULY 25, WITH UNHAPPY RESULTS FOR THE ARVN. OF THE TEN ARMORED VEHICLES SENT TOWARD TRUNG NGHIA JULY 24, FIVE WERE PUT OUT OF ACTION THE NEXT DAY. (NHA TRANG REGIONAL BRIEFING JULY 26, HOWEVER, REPORTED ONLY ONE TANK DESTROYED AND ONE DAMAGED.) VNAF FLEW TOTAL OF 45 AIRSTRIKES IN KONTUM JULY 25-26 AND FRIENDLY ARTILLERY EXPENDITURE INCREASED, AT LEAST ON JULY 25, OVER LEVEL OF PRECEDING FEW DAYS, BUT FRIENDLY CASUALTIES INCREASED ALSO. CONSUL CONCLUDES THAT THIS LATEST SOUND AND FURY HAS SO FAR FAILED TO ALTER THE PREVAILING STAND-OFF.

3. RANGER LETHARGY AND ACCOMMODATION CRIMP GVN MILITARY ACTION IN BINH DINH: THE TAM QUAN DISTRICT CHIEF TOLD QUI NHON POLOFF THAT THE 6TH RANGER GROUP UNDER LT. COL. LAC HAS LOST ANY DESIRE TO FIGHT SINCE CEASE-FIRE II, FORCING THE DISTRICT CHIEF TO CANCEL HIS PLAN (BACKED BY THE PROVINCE CHIEF) TO WREST FROM ENEMY CONTROL 500 HECTARES OF RICE LAND WEST OF HIGHWAY 1 AND DISTRIBUTE IT AMONG LANDLESS REFUGEES. ALSO, THE RANGER-CONTROLLED ARTILLERY BATTERY ASSIGNED TO THE DISTRICT REFUSES TO SUPPORT LOCAL RF AND PF UNITS. DISTRICT CHIEF CLAIMS THE RANGERS, INSTBD OZJFGHTING, ARE TREATING WITH THE ENEMY AND, IN ONE CASE AT LEAST, ROBBING VILLAGERS. HE SAYS COMMUNICATION WITH THE ENEMY EXISTS AT ALL LEVELS UP TO LT. COL. LAC, WHOM HE HAS OVERHEARD IN RADIO CONVERSATIONS WITH THE COMMUNISTS; THESE CONVERSATIONS REPORTEDLY RESULTED IN A DE FACTO CEASE-FIRE AND HAVE PERMITTED COMMUNIST TRADE WITH GVN-CONTROLLED AREAS. LT. COL. LAC HAS REPLACED A RANGER UNIT WHICH HAD BEEN HOLDING THE FRONT EAST OF HIGHWAY 1 WITH AN RF COMPANY WHOSE PREVIOUS AND PEACEFUL AO WAS TURNED OVER TO THE RANGERS. RANGERS PROCEEDED TO LINE THEIR POCKETS BY ROBBING THE VILLAGERS. DISTRICT CHIEF HEARS THAT 6TH RANGER GROUP MAY SOON SWITCH PROVINCES WITH 4TH RANGER GROUP IN PHU

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YEN, OFFERING SOME HOPE OF IMPROVEMENT. HOWEVER, BINH DINH S-3 TOLD POLOFF RECENTLY THAT RELUCTANCE TO TAKE OFFENSIVE ACTIONS HAS BECOME WIDE-SPREAD AMONG RVNAF UNITS THROUGHOUT THE SECTOR SINCE JOINT COMMUNIQUE PUBLISHED SIX WEEKS AGO.

4. PRISONER RELEASE: THE PRG RELEASE OF ARVN PW'S SCHEDULED TO BEGIN JULY 26 IN THE DUC CO CAREA OF PLEIKU APPARENTLY HAS NOT YET STARTED. PROV REP REPORTS THAT TPJMC TEAM FROM

SAIGON ARRIVED JULY 25 AND ASKED ICCS REGION III TO SUPERVISE EXCHANGE. CANADIANS ALONE AGREED TO GO. OTHERS PLEADED LACK OF INSTRUCTIONS FROM THEIR SAIGON SUPERIORS. CONTACTED BY RADIO, SAIGON ICCS REPORTEDLY DISCLAIMED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF PLANNED RELEASE, WITH RESULT THAT TPJMC DELS DEPARTED FOR DUC CO WITHOUT ANY ICCS REPRESENTATION. NO SUBSEQUENT PRISONER RELEASE HAS BEEN REPORTED.

5. ICCS WITHOUT THE CANADIANS: CONSUL PHAN THIET REPORTS THAT COL. CAMPBELL, LAST CANADIAN IN REGION IV, DEPARTED AFTERNOON OF JULY 26 FOLLOWING AIRPORT CEREMONY ATTENDED BY MOST PROVINCIAL NOTABLES. IN NHA TRANG, THE DEPARTURE OF THE CANADIANS AND THE TEMPORARY ABSENCE OF INDONESIANS (A NEW TEAM WILL ROTATE IN AUGUST 4) HAS LEFT THE PCS COMPOUND IN HANDS OF POLES, HUNGARIANS AND PA&E. EAST EUROPEANS TOLD CONGEN POLOFF THEY PLAN NO OFFICIAL ACTIONS UNTIL A REPLACEMENT FOR CANDEL ARRIVES. A HUNGARIAN LIEUTENANT SAID CONSIDERATION HAD BEEN GIVEN TO PULLING TEAMS BACK TO REGION III HQ IN THE INTERIM (SEE SAIGON 13399 AND NHA TRANG 0723) BUT THAT ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS POSED BY SUCH CONCENTRATION WEIGHED TOO HEAVILY AGAINST IT. LOCAL EE'S DO NOT SEEM DISAPPOINTED BY THIS DECISION AND, DOUBTLESS SOFTENED BY THE CHARMS OF NHA TRANG, HAVE ACCEPTED OUR INVITATION TO A DETENTE VOLLEYBALL MATCH JULY 28. SIGNED TEARE UNQUOTE MARTIN

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